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Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series. Volume V., A.D. 1766-1783. Edited through the direction of the Lord President of the Council by JAMES MUNRO, M.A., Beit Lecturer in Colonial History in the University of Oxford, under the general supervision of Sir ALMERIC W. FITZROY, K.C.V.O., Clerk of the Privy Council. (London: Wyman and Sons. 1912. Pp. xli, 830.)

WITH the issue of the fifth volume of the *Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series*, the work as originally planned is completed, and there lies spread before us in compact, orderly, and convenient form a series of invaluable official records, covering the years from 1613 to 1783, that have hitherto been locked up in some ninety-nine manuscript volumes, not inaccessible indeed, but remotely situated as far as American students were concerned. Within the short period of less than four years, this material, indispensable for a proper study of colonial history, has been brought to our shelves and rendered as available as are the printed records of our own colonies. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact, for although the actual contribution of new information is not great, the contribution of a new point of view and the vitalizing of an historical factor of first rank, the influence of which has never before been appreciated, are of the highest significance.

In the past students have groped in the dark as far as the fundamental principles of British policy are concerned. It is easy to read the leading mercantilist pamphlets, to study the correspondence, as far as obtainable, of the Secretary of State, to search the preambles of the acts of Parliament, and to follow the debates in Parliament, often very meagre, in order to gather from these sources what the British government was really trying to do. But I doubt if in this way one will ever learn the true inwardness of the British position. The rules and precedents, which constituted the traditions of the government and were adhered to with unyielding tenacity to the end, can only be found in the representations of the Board of Trade, in the opinions of the legal advisers of the board and the crown, and in the proceedings of the Privy Council and the departments. It is true that the colonies were not following these precedents or recognizing the authority of these traditions, but the British government was following them and recognizing them as legal, and in so doing was furnishing one of the causes, at least, of the colonial revolt.

For example, by 1763, the colonial assemblies, everywhere and in practically every particular, were exercising the functions and powers of the House of Commons in England. Yet despite this fact, the Privy Council, the lawyers, and the Board of Trade, refused to alter their traditional position that the assemblies were inferior bodies, owing what privileges they possessed to the royal grace and favor, and in no way, either in power or privilege, analogous to, coequal, co-ordinate, or com-

parable with the great legislative body at home. In this respect, and in many others touching colonial laws, finance, appointments, and manufactures, the home authorities were deliberately setting their faces against accomplished facts and were ignoring the actual situation in America. By means of new instructions to the governors and a more rigid application of the royal right of disallowance, they continued to apply rules of control that had practically become obsolete and had long since been repudiated by the colonists themselves. And the important fact is that as the *de facto* independence of the colonies increased, the council, in all that concerned the royal prerogative, was demanding the enforcement of the full letter of the law.

The volume shows also that the Board of Trade maintained its activity as an advisory body to the end, that is, during a period that has commonly been considered one of decline in its functions. Its reports and representations from 1765 to 1782 are long and frequent. The committee of the whole council was likewise an efficient body. I am impressed with the number of hearings to which it gave attention, the details of which are here given (pp. 203-210, 221-222, 248-265, 386-388, 410-415). One of these hearings recalls the famous appearance of Franklin before the committee of Parliament; another supplements admirably the recently published letters of Dennys de Berdt. We see the claims of Jeronimy Clifford still agitated by his executors nearly a century after they originated, thus constituting one of the longest cases on record (§ 15). We see also the final issue of the case of Connecticut *v.* the Mohegan Indians, hitherto unknown, when the council dismissed in 1773 the last appeal of the Indians made in 1769 (§ 133).

A number of useful appendixes complete the series. They contain (1) commissions and instructions to the governors; (2) appointments to colonial councils; (3) acts confirmed or disallowed; (4) items from the Plantation Registers; (5) grants of land; and (6) a fine map of the Island of St. John (Prince Edward Island). Most important of all is the complete list, given in an addendum, of the members of the council from 1613 to 1783 (not "1613-83" as the heading says). This list, filling 173 pages, will be of great convenience to those who need to refer to it for biographical information, or who wish to study the political complexion of the council at any given date.

The preface is written by Sir Almeric FitzRoy, the clerk of the council. It is not only an admirable summary of the general situation and a delightful literary essay, but it contains a number of judicious commentaries upon the leading statesmen, particularly the Duke of Grafton, whose character and ability Sir Almeric wishes to present in a more favorable light. He acknowledges that the duke "was liable to have his judgment clouded by irresolution at critical moments", but offers in extenuation Grafton's extreme youth (not thirty-one) and his belief, stated at the time, "that if his disposition for moderate counsels had been pursued by his successors 'the country would have readily settled all its

disputes with our colonies' and at the same time 'relieved America from the fetters of the old charters'". Furthermore, Grafton was defeated by only one vote in his efforts to include tea with the other articles the duties on which were repealed and, as Sir Almeric says, "Hillsborough betrayed his chief by the omission from the minute communicating the decision to the governors of the colonies of the soothing and conciliatory expressions which the defeated section of the Cabinet obtained their colleagues' consent to introduce." It is fitting that Sir Almeric should give the parting word to a work begun at his own initiation and in which his interest has been maintained to the end.

A sixth volume will follow completing the series and containing material from the uncalendared papers in the custody of the Privy Council as far as the year 1800, when that collection of papers comes to an end.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

George the Third and Charles Fox: the Concluding Part of the American Revolution. By Sir GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, Bart., O.M. In two volumes. Volume I. (New York, London, Bombay, and Calcutta: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1912. Pp. xi, 311.)

THE historical work of Sir George Otto Trevelyan is most exasperating to the reviewer. One is so carried away with the mere reading of the entrancing pages that one forgets to be on the watch for all those little errors and inaccuracies of statement which are the joy of every true reviewer. Moreover, the author has dwelt with his subject so long, and thought upon it so deeply that what he has chosen to tell us has a certainty and inevitableness about it like a decree of fate. The truth in the large has been so perfectly divined that any error of detail is not of sufficient moment to notice. It is true that there is no doubt in the mind of the reader of this volume, as there has been no chance for dubiety on the part of the reader of the earlier volumes, that a Whig sympathizer has written the history, but he is a generous Whig who can speak with enthusiasm even of George III. in his better aspects as the earnest and devoted defender of his country against the attacks of France and Spain. The Tory Gibbon, too, even in the character of hireling defender of Lord North and his policies, comes in for generous praise and evident admiration. Trevelyan writes like a great man of affairs who has lived in the midst of the political events of which he discourses. He is the familiar of all his heroes and even of his scapegoats. His mind has long been made up about them, and there is no shadow of doubt to cool the warmth of his praises or of his denunciations. His descriptions of Fox send thrill after thrill even through a skeptical, cynical historical investigator who has schooled himself to be suspicious of all literary effects. So, too, is it with the passages about